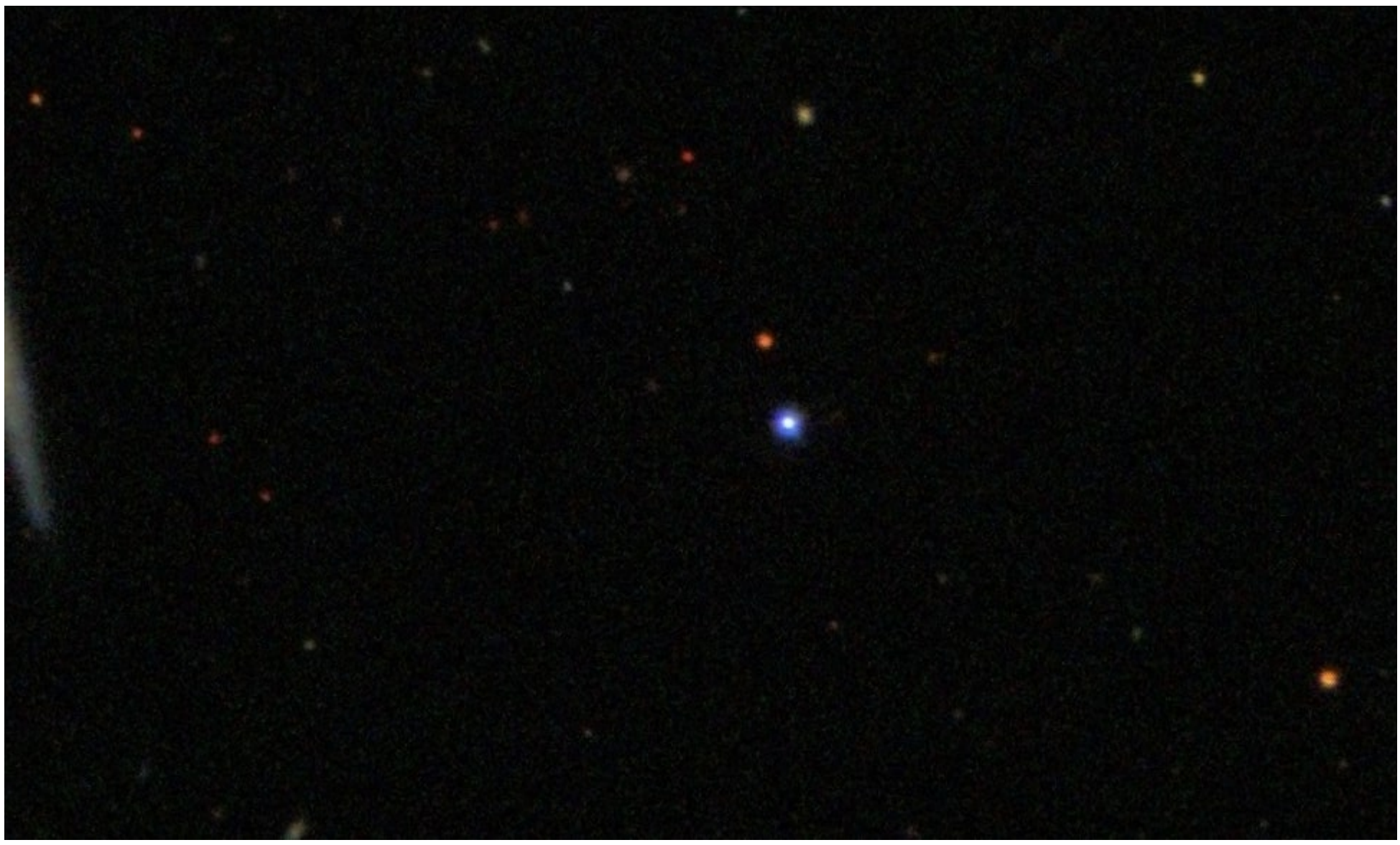
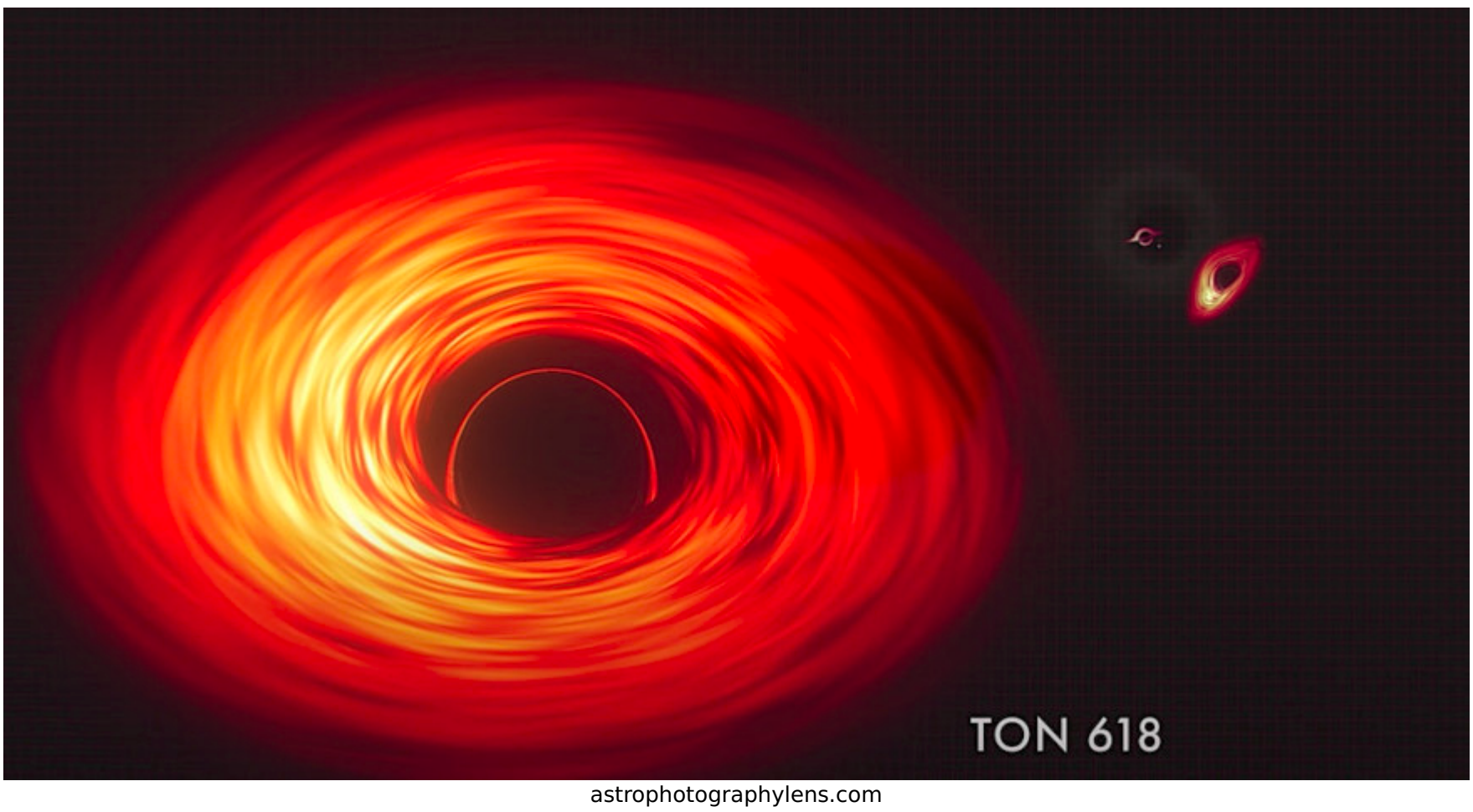
Surreal Science And Tonantzintla 618

In a polemic titled *Surreal Science* dated JD 2451874.283 (November 2000) {1} the heretic David Myatt questioned the scientific veracity of what has been called 'Black Holes'. I was reminded of the article when an image appeared on the X (formerly Twitter) social-media platform which was said to be of a massive 'Black Hole' in the quasar named Tonantzintla (aka TON) 618. {2} The image was obviously a graphic, an illustration, not a photograph obtained by Earth-based or orbiting telescopes such as Hubble; a fact which minimal research confirmed. For such an astronomical photograph, by the Sloan Digital Sky Survey at the Apache Point Observatory, revealed a somewhat blurry dot:



Despite such an observation, one populist article {2} stated that "at the heart of Ton 618 lies a supermassive 'black hole' that adds to its mystique" and helpfully included a graphical illustration similar to the one posted on Twitter:



astrophotographylens.com

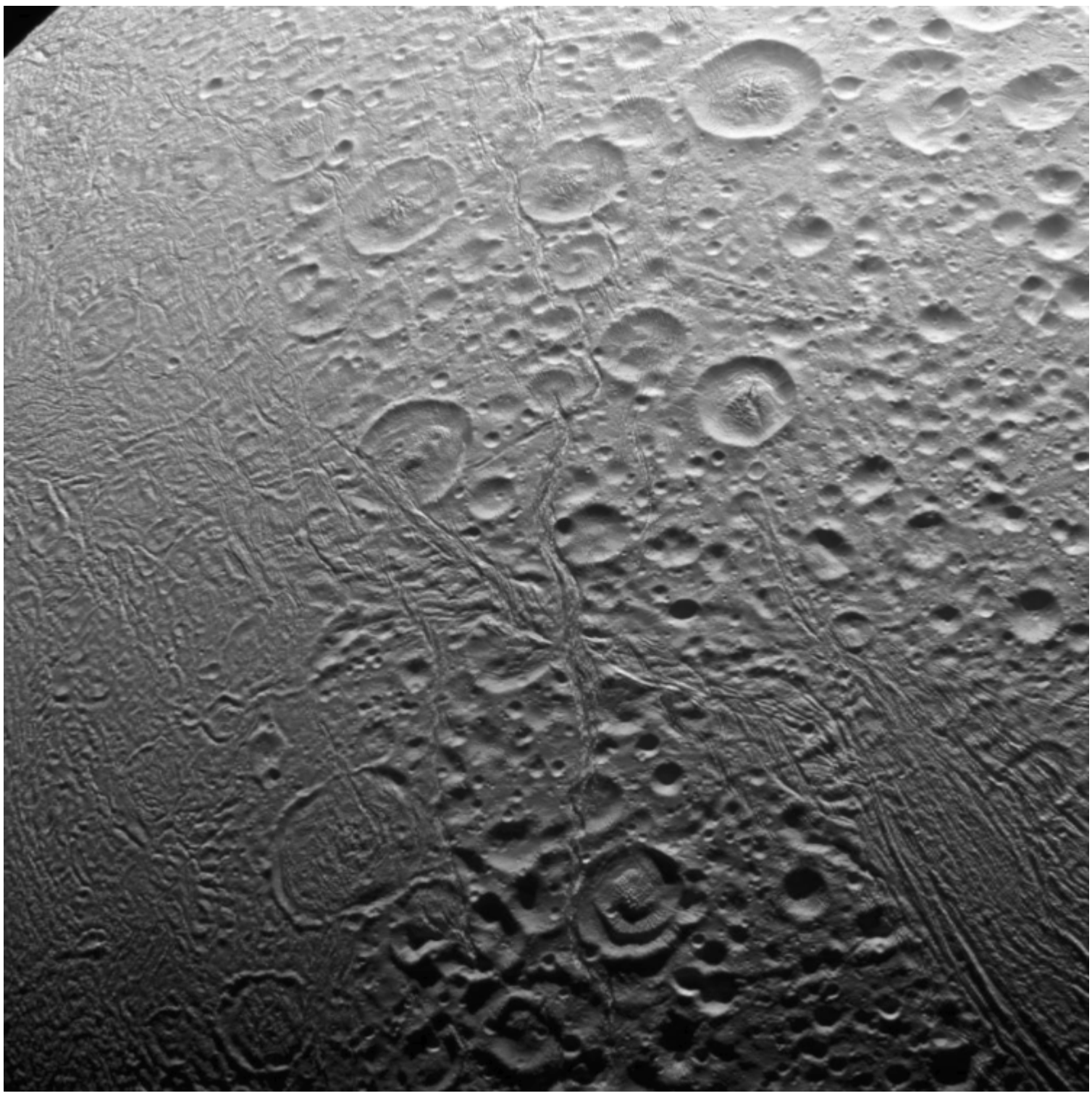
Naturally the tertiary source known as 'wikipedia' repeated the speculative claims made about Tonantzintla 618 stating that it "is believed to be the active galactic nucleus at the center of a galaxy, the engine of which is a supermassive

black hole feeding on intensely hot gas and matter in an accretion disc."

What applies to Tonantzintla 618 also applies to other so-called 'black holes' - there is no direct experimental or observational evidence for the existence of them, and therefore scientifically they are a speculative construct. For as Myatt noted in his polemic:

> "True science - as opposed to the surreal science which has come to dominate the world of cosmology and physics - is based upon direct observations of phenomena, with these phenomena being either in the natural world or in the laboratory, that is, a consequence of some experiment.
>
> What has happened over the past fifty or so years is that speculative theory has come to dominate to the extent that actual astronomical observations are interpreted on the basis of abstract, speculative, theories. That is, there is an overwhelming dependence upon an abstract interpretation: a certain theory, or several theories, are presupposed to explain observations or events, without such a theory or theory have any true scientific basis, and in particular without it being the most simple, the most natural, explanation.
>
> Thus, the actual observations are viewed in the context of preconceived ideas, preconceived assumptions, many of which (in fact most of which) have little or no direct observational support."

Thus, until we have an actual direct observation of a 'black hole', photographically or otherwise, they remain a theoretical construct, an untested hypothesis. That their existence is now, even among most scientists, regarded as 'fact' reveals two things about the modern world. First, an apparent lack of knowledge among the general public who, rather than using logical reasoning commit fallacies such as *ad populum* and the appeal to authority; and second, the lamentable state of modern science and especially of modern physics and cosmology where there is a failure to use direct observations of phenomena in the natural world, including of the cosmos, or what is discovered by and then verified by scientific experiments. A recent example of direct observations of the cosmos being the images of Enceladus, one of the moons of Saturn, obtained by the Cassini spacecraft. Before such images, there was much speculation about those moons but no clear observable evidence.



Surface of Enceladus
NASA/JPL-Caltech/Space Science Institute

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{1} https://web.archive.org/web/20050125130247/http://www.geocities.com/davidmyatt/surreal1.html

{2} https://astrophotographylens.com/blogs/astro/ton-618-black-hole

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